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U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
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WASHINGTON, D. C.

RELEASE FOR PUBLICATION
NOVEMBER 7, 1934 (WEDNESDAY)

THE MARKET BASKET

by

Bureau of Home Economics, U. S. Department of Agriculture

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FAMILY FOOD GUIDE TO LOW-COST BALANCED DIET

Every meal -- Milk for children, bread for all

Every day --

Cereal in porridge or pudding
Potatoes
Tomatoes (or oranges) for children
A green or yellow vegetable
A fruit or additional vegetable
Milk for all

Two to four times a week --

Tomatoes for all
Dried beans and peas or peanuts
Eggs (especially for children)
Lean meat, fish, or poultry, or
cheese

YOUR QUOTA OF MILK

Most of us do not use enough milk, say the nutrition specialists. They have been thinking so for some time. Now their opinion is confirmed by the findings of the Consumers' Counsel of the Agricultural Adjustment Administration, who has collected information as to the quantity of milk purchased by families with children in public schools in 59 cities in 46 states. A considerable proportion of those families bought no fresh milk at all. The average quantity of milk bought by all those families was enough for about one glass (half-pint) per person each day. What we ought to have, says the Bureau of Home Economics of the U. S. Department of Agriculture, is a quart of milk per day for every child, and a pint for each adult.

That does not mean you should drink that much milk unless you wish to. The milk will be just as useful to you if you get it in soups, or custards, or sauces or gravies -- or for that matter, in cheese, where you get it in concentrated form. For any cooking purpose you can use evaporated milk or dried milk just as well as fresh fluid milk, probably at less cost.

There is good reason, of course, for all this talk about milk, especially for people who have very little money to spend for food. No one food in the world can satisfy all the food needs of the human body, but milk comes nearest to doing it. It is most important for its calcium, which is bone building material; its proteins, for muscle building; its easily digested fat, and some sugar for body fuel; its vitamins A and G especially, though it contains other vitamins as well. It is not easy to get enough of some of these substances, especially calcium, unless you do use milk. And with this unique variety of food values, milk is a good buy, even at city prices which may seem high. In your pint a day and your child's quart, you are getting more for your money than you can buy in any other single food. And to that extent you can spend less for other foods.

You get those same values, too, if you use milk in other forms -- evaporated milk or dried milk, which in cities you will find cheaper than fresh whole milk and easier to keep.

Evaporated milk is pure fresh cow's milk with much of the water evaporated (fresh whole milk is more than 87 percent water). If, to a can of evaporated milk you add an equal measure of water, you can use it in most of the ways you would use fresh milk. And the food value would be the same at lower cost.

Condensed milk is pure fresh cow's milk sweetened and evaporated, therefore it is thicker than evaporated milk. It may be used in many of the same ways evaporated milk is used, but is too sweet for infant feeding, unless the doctor prescribes it.

Dried milk is pure fresh cow's milk dried to a fine white powder. Dried whole milk is sold at retail in tightly sealed cans, under various trade names. Dried skim milk, which is the cheapest form of milk you can buy, is marketed wholesale, chiefly to bakers, and ice cream makers who use it in their products. Sometimes they will sell it to you in small quantities. Or you could get it through your "Co-Op", if you belong to one. It is an excellent buy for school lunch kitchens, for community centers, or for relief supplies. It will keep a month or more in a tightly covered can in a cool place.

Dried skim milk has practically the same food value as fresh skim milk, and that means the food values of whole milk, except the fat and vitamin A. It costs less than fresh skim milk, and is a cheap source of calcium and milk proteins. It costs less than whole milk whether fresh, evaporated, or condensed. And you can add the milk fat and the vitamin A to your diet by using a little more butter when you use dried skim milk, and still the cost is less than whole milk in any form. One quart of fresh whole milk equals 3-1/2 ounces of dried skim milk plus 1-1/2 ounces of butter.

As for cheese, you get nearly all the whole milk values in plain American (cheddar) cheese, and skim milk values in cottage cheese, which is made of skim milk. But cheese, of course, is more concentrated, and the milk values count up faster in a small portion.

Here are the equivalents of fresh milk in various other forms:

One quart of fresh whole milk equals -

- 17 ounces evaporated milk (1 tall can holds 14-1/2 ounces).
- 1 quart skim milk and 1-1/2 ounces butter.
- 5 ounces American cheese (Cheddar).
- 4-1/2 ounces dried whole milk.
- 3-1/2 ounces dried skim milk and 1-1/2 ounces butter.

Directions for Using Dried Skim Milk

Dried skim milk can be made into fluid milk simply by mixing with water - 1/4 cup of the powder for each cup of water, or 1 cup of the powder for each quart of water. To increase the milk values, increase the proportion of dried skim milk to water. Measure the water into a bowl, sprinkle the powder over the surface a little at a time, beating with an egg whip, a dover beater, or a fork. Use either cold or warm water. Do not use boiling water. It is likely to make the powder lump.

You can use dried skim milk as it comes, if you are making bread, for instance, or any other flour mixture. Sift the milk powder with the other dry ingredients and add butter if you can, to get the food value of whole milk. Then add either milk or water for the liquid called for in the recipe. For soups and chowders, gravies and sauces, make the dried skim milk into fluid milk by mixing with water, as directed in the previous paragraph.

RECIPES

Lentil Soup with Milk

2 cups dry lentils	1 tablespoon flour
2 cups milk	3 tablespoons fat
1 small onion	1 teaspoon salt

Wash and soak the dry lentils overnight in two cups of water. Then drain, add 3 pints of fresh water, cook the lentils until tender, and put them through a sieve or collander. Heat the milk, and stir in the lentil pulp. Brown the onion in the fat, stir in the flour, and add this mixture to the hot liquid. Cook for a few minutes and add salt and pepper to taste.

Oatmeal Chowder

2 cups quick cooking oats	2 medium onions, chopped
1 quart boiling water	2 cups shredded carrots
1 quart milk	Pepper
1/4 pound diced salt pork	Salt

Cook the oats in the quart of boiling water for about 4 minutes, and stir frequently. Add the milk. Fry the salt pork until crisp, remove the pork, and cook the onions until well browned in the fat. Mix the cooked oats, onions, and carrots and simmer for a few minutes, then add the pork and salt and pepper to taste. Place two or three crackers in a hot soup dish and pour in the chowder.

Cheese Soup

1 quart milk
2 tablespoons butter
2 tablespoons flour
1 cup soft flaked cheese

Salt
Paprika
Dash Tabasco sauce
1 tablespoon finely
chopped parsley

Heat the milk in a double boiler and stir some of the hot milk into the well blended butter and flour. Return to the double boiler and cook the mixture for 5 minutes. Add the cheese and stir until the cheese has melted, then beat until smooth. Season to taste with salt, paprika, and tabasco sauce. Sprinkle a little of the parsley over the top of each serving.

Rice and Onion Soup

2 tablespoons broken rice
1/2 teaspoon salt
2 cups water
1 onion, chopped very fine

2 cups milk
1/4 cup salt pork cut in
small pieces

Wash the rice and sprinkle slowly into the boiling salted water, add the onion, and cook until the rice is tender. Brown the pork until crisp, remove from the fat. Mix all of these ingredients, except the pork, with the milk and heat the mixture. When hot add the crisped salt pork, and serve.



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CHEAP SEASONINGS FOR THE LOW-COST MEAL

It is tremendously important for us to know what kinds of food we need.

Our health depends upon it. But it is doubtful whether all the teaching in the

world on that point would keep us on a good diet if we couldn't enjoy the food.

Eating as a duty is hard work. In fact, it isn't often done!

To make plain, simple foods inviting is the task, says the Bureau of

Home Economics of the U. S. Department of Agriculture -- doubly the task when

the family pocketbook limits the choice of foods themselves. Once the necessary

food values are provided, flavor is the thing the housewife has to think of if

she is to satisfy the family. That means making the most of the natural flavor

in each food, of course, and skilful "touching up" with added seasonings; for

present purposes, the cheapest seasonings we can find.

Salt, pepper, salt pork, meat drippings, onions, garlic, vinegar, sugar -- those are our cheapest seasonings for meats and vegetables. The trick is to make the most of them, as well as of the natural flavors in the food. Salt we take for granted, but there are points to notice by the way. A certain amount of salt is necessary to the human body, as everybody knows. Cattle and horses and sheep, in the pasture, must have a salt lick somewhere, because they are vegetarians, and do not get enough salt in the foods they eat. The carnivorous animals get the salt they need in the flesh of their prey. Meat-eating humans get salt in the tissues of the meat, so they need to add less salt to their food than do vegetarians.

There are so many ways in which salt enters our diet, however, that we rarely need to think about having or not having enough. Some people, in fact, need to be cautioned against using too much.

The good cook uses salt discreetly -- often merely to bring out flavor, as in apple sauce, or cake. Many people use a little salt on melon or grapefruit, for the same reason -- not to taste the salt. In breakfast cereal, or potatoes, or other starchy foods, salt adds flavor -- complements the bland flavor of the food itself. Cook your cereals and vegetables in salted water, say the experts, to get the best diffusion of the salt.

Next to salt among the cheap seasonings, we depend most on fat of some kind, and that is where salt pork comes in, with salt and a meat flavor combined. Cook it with greens, or string beans, or cabbage. Or cut the salt pork in bits, brown these and sprinkle them, with the drippings, over the greens. Or use the crisp pieces in soups or chowders; or in mashed sweetpotatoes -- beat them in and put the sweetpotatoes in a baking pan to brown in the oven. The result is sweetpotatoes with quite a different taste from usual.



Those same crisp bits of salt pork, or of bacon, or the "cracklins" left from rendering lard, make "cracklin" bread, or "shortnin'" bread. As for salt-pork gravy, made with milk and a little flour thickening, try that, if you never have, on rice or boiled potatoes.

You treasure bacon drippings, of course. And keep them in a jar, in a refrigerator or the next coolest place you have, else they will turn rancid very soon. They have the salty, smoked flavor that makes them a choice seasoning for greens or beans, or cabbage, and a good fat for browning potato cakes, frying sliced cooked potatoes, mush, liver, some kinds of fish, rice fritters, or even sliced apples. Ham fat, or fat from the cured picnic shoulder, has just as fine a flavor as the bacon for seasoning or for gravy. Drippings from beef roasts, if you do not use them all to make brown gravy, make good shortening for the famous Yorkshire pudding that goes with British roast beef. It is best, by the way, to keep the different kinds of meat drippings in separate jars--that is, pork in one jar, beef in another, always in a cool place.

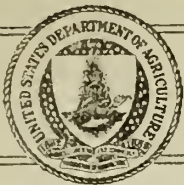
Sugar, like salt, can be used merely to develop flavor. A little sugar in tomatoes, with the salt, is pleasing to many people. And when summer comes again, it will be well to remember that a little sugar in fresh corn or peas or lima beans brings back the sweetness so often lost when these vegetables have stood, after picking, until their natural sugar has changed to starch--which doesn't take very long!

It is the Germans and other Central Europeans who make so many "sours" and "sweet sours"--sauerbraten (sour beef), sour cabbage, sweet-sour beets, using, of course, vinegar, or vinegar and sugar for the seasoning. A good recipe for sweet-sour red cabbage calls for a little fat (butter best of all), brown sugar, vinegar, and chopped tart apple, to give the tempting flavor desired.

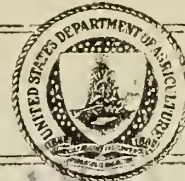
Onions, one of our almost indispensable seasonings, may be abused, as garlic often is. But both flavors can be made agreeable to many people who otherwise do not like them by using just a little--a "suspicion," as some cooks would say; or by just rubbing the pan with the cut surface of the onion.

Herbs and spices are really a story in themselves, but pepper comes in here. So does curry. Black pepper and white pepper come from the same plant, in fact from the same berry, or peppercorn. The outer coat is made into black pepper, the inner coat into mild white pepper. Cayenne pepper is the fruit of a plant much like our common garden variety, but hotter. And Mexican chili peppers are hotter still. Keep pepper of all kinds tightly covered if you want to keep the flavor.

Curry costs more than the commoner seasonings, but if you like it you can use it to excellent advantage for variety. Curry powder is a mixture of spices, long used in India and the East, but only in recent years has it come into use in temperate climates. The mixtures vary, but curry powder as commonly sold in this country contains turmeric, coriander seed, black and cayenne peppers, fenugreek seed, cumin, ginger, and lime juice. To keep its flavors, it should be kept in a bottle or jar, tightly corked or stoppered. Curry is so different from other seasonings that it makes a good variation for meats, fish, or vegetables. The typical curry-seasoned dish consists of rice, or contains rice.



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IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Substitute this release for
Nov. 28, 1934 issue of the
Market Basket

CORRECTION

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cheese

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NEW LABELS ON CANNED FOODS

In the near future, when you visit one group of grocery stores, you will find some canned foods which are labeled to show the quality of the goods you get for the price you pay. That is, you will find cans labeled, for example, "Grade A, Fancy Quality Golden Bantam Corn," and "Grade A (Fancy) Red Ripe Tomatoes." There will be other cans labeled "Grade B (Extra Standard)", and "Grade C (Standard)".

At present standards for grades of whole grain style corn, cream style corn, tomatoes, canned peas, snap beans, and grapefruit have been promulgated by the Secretary of Agriculture. Tentative grades are available for a number of other canned fruits and vegetables.

As a discerning customer, you realize at once that this is something new. You have not been getting this information on canned foods heretofore, except in a few localities. Grades A, B, and C are Government grades--based on the specifications and standards of quality set up by the Bureau of Agricultural Economics of the U. S. Department of Agriculture. They are grades that have been used by the canneries and packing-----1030-35

houses to show the quality of the products as offered wholesale to the jobber or retailer, and the service of the Government inspector is available to make sure that the retailer gets the quality he bargained for. But, until now, nobody has passed that information on to you, the customer. The label you saw in some stores said, maybe, "Superb," or "Jim's Best," or "Red Mill," or "Blue Flower," or something else which might go with a pretty picture, but gave you no clue to the quality of what was in the can until you had tried out the brand. Even then how could you know whether "Superb," say, from one firm was the same grade as "Elephant" brand from another? Or how "Superlative" compares with "Finest" or "Wonderful" or thousands of others? Are "Choice" products better than "Select"? What are "Standard" tomatoes?

With the old kind of labeling, you cannot rely on price either, as a guide. Recently a group of homemakers, working in the Bureau of Home Economics laboratory with the assistance of expert graders from the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, tested many cans of well-known brands of canned peas, corn, and tomatoes. Of the four highest-priced brands of canned peas, 3 out of 14 cans were found to be not Grade A as you would expect, but Grade C quality. Only one can was Grade A. The same thing held true in the cans of corn and tomatoes--many of the highest priced cans turned out to be Grade C.

But now, in one group of stores at least, you will be able to tell what you are buying before you take the can home and open it. All three grades, A, B, and C, are good products. There is no question of their wholesomeness. Grades B and C, in fact, will constitute the great bulk of canned foods on the market. The differences are largely in size of piece or uniformity of the product in the can, the color, maturity, and perhaps flavor. In Grade A tomatoes, you should find whole, or nearly whole, all-red tomatoes, with the superior flavor of the vine-ripened fruit, picked and canned at the top of its quality. Grade C

tomatoes are probably the run of the field. Some may be slightly under-ripe, the color not evenly red, there may be some yellowish pieces in with the red. But they are clean and wholesome in every respect, and they must have a certain percent of solid fruit to make the grade.

So the question is, how do you want to use the tomatoes, and what can you afford to pay for them? For stewing or scalloping, for soup or sauce, the size of the pieces in the can makes no difference, nor is the depth of the color important. Even for juice you can use the paler colored product. In other words, for these purposes, you can very well use Grade C tomatoes, instead of the more expensive Grade A or Grade B.

Something like this is true of other canned products. Grade A corn is the best in color, size and tenderness and perhaps in flavor. Grade C is less perfect in color, the grains may be broken and uneven in size. But if you are making corn soup, or corn pudding, or corn fritters, you can use Grade C corn and make a perfectly good dish for the family. If you cannot afford Grade A or Grade B, you can often do well with Grade C, provided you choose the method of preparation best suited to the cheaper product.

At all events, housekeepers have emphatically expressed their desire for labels that mean something. The W. R. A. Code for the canning industry calls upon the canners to agree upon some method of their own for labeling quality grades, if they do not accept the one the Government proposes; some method that might be adopted by the industry and accepted by the Government. Now one big firm steps out, not waiting for the rest, and uses the labels and standards established by the Department of Agriculture for voluntary adoption.

This is the time then, says the Bureau of Home Economics, for the housekeeper, at every purchase she makes, to ask whether the product carries a grade designation, ask it in every store she deals with.

There is something else to remember, in connection with labels on canned foods, the Bureau points out. Grades A, B, and C represent standards set up for voluntary compliance on the part of canners and dealers. They are not mandatory. But there is another kind of label which is required by law. Under the Food and Drugs Act, any can of substandard goods must be labeled "Below U. S. Standard." In a can of peaches, for example, this may mean merely that the pieces are not perfect in shape, or otherwise not up to the standard of Grade C. It is wholesome, however. No food that is unwholesome can be on the market legally, and the Federal food inspection service exists to prevent that.

